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Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the sixtieth session

Follow-up to the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme

Letter dated 17 November 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to present my compliments to you and, pursuant to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and on the instructions of my Government, to request the inclusion in the agenda of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly of an additional item, entitled "Follow-up to the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum setting out the reasons for the above request is attached (see annex). Pursuant to rule 43 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I also request that my delegation be permitted to attend and participate in any meeting of the General Committee at which this request is discussed.

Lastly, I have the honour respectfully to request you to have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Bruno **Stagno**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

05-61445 (E) 231105 231105

Annex

[Original: English/Spanish]

Explanatory memorandum

On 7 September 2005, one week before the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly and subsequent to three earlier reports on the United Nations oil-for-food programme, the Independent Inquiry Committee submitted to the Security Council a full evaluation of the management of that programme entitled "The Management of the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme". Although the report was repeatedly quoted during the negotiations on the Summit Outcome document, its recommendations were not reflected in that document.

The Security Council has been the United Nations body that has received the results of the work of the Committee in accordance with resolution 1538 (2004). However, the six major recommendations listed in section XII of chapter 1 of volume I of the report refer to administrative management and oversight, which should be considered and analysed by the General Assembly.

The report of the Independent Inquiry Committee concluded that the difficulties encountered in the administrative management and internal oversight of the oil-for-food programme were "symptomatic of systemic problems in United Nations administration" and that "consequently, the lessons drawn are broadly applicable to the Organization as a whole" (vol. I, p. 1). The Committee also pointed out that the "main conclusions are unambiguous ... the Organization requires stronger executive leadership, thoroughgoing administrative reform, and more reliable controls and auditing" (vol. I, p. 1).

Taking into account Article 100, paragraphs 1 and 2, and article 101, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Charter, the Committee's report states that "professional disciplines at the United Nations are weak and eroded, and the Secretariat, from its senior levels on down, proved unable to deal effectively with political pressures on its administrative processes ... [and that] there appears to be a pervasive culture of responsibility avoidance and resistance to accountability" (vol. I, p. 13).

In section XII of volume I, the report makes the following recommendation which fall within the framework of the competence of the General Assembly:

- Create the position of Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- Strengthen independence of oversight and auditing
- Improve coordination and the oversight framework for cross-agency programmes
- Reform and improve management performance
- Expand conflict-of-interest and financial disclosure requirements
- Cost recovery

Taking into account the conclusions of the report, Costa Rica considers that all Member States of the United Nations should study the report and ensure effective follow-up to it in accordance with the procedure established for the consideration of

items and the taking of decisions by the General Assembly as the organ responsible for administrative management.

During the presentation of the report on 7 September 2005 to the Security Council, the Chairman of the Independent Inquiry Committee himself emphasized the urgent need "to take action by the time the General Assembly completes its sixtieth regular session". Given the importance attached by Costa Rica to the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry Committee, we feel that the General Assembly should consider those proposals in order to take appropriate action, bearing in mind rules 152 to 157 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

For the foregoing reasons, Costa Rica, pursuant to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, is requesting the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly entitled "Follow-up to the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme".